

**CLASS SPECIFICATION**  
**County of Fairfax, Virginia**

**CLASS CODE:** 4167      **TITLE:** PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATOR III      **GRADE:** P-20

**DEFINITION:**

Under general supervision, serves in the Public Safety Communications Center on an assigned 12-hour shift, rotating among police dispatching, fire/emergency medical service dispatching, teletype operations, and/or call-taking; and performs related duties as required.

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CLASS:**

This is the full-performance level for Public Safety Communicators.

All Public Safety Communicator positions are established at the Public Safety Communicator III level. Incumbents classified as Public Safety Communicator III must be proficient in call taking and two of the three remaining public safety communications specialties (I. e., police dispatching, fire/emergency medical service dispatching, or teletype operations). Incumbents proficient in call taking and one other specialty serve in an underfill capacity as Public Safety Communicators II until successful completion of a prescribed training program and certification in a second specialty. All Public Safety Communicators must be proficient in call taking. Incumbents rotate among the various functions as the workload requires.

**ILLUSTRATIVE DUTIES:**

As a fire/EMS dispatcher or police dispatcher:

Following established policies and procedures, operates a computer-aided dispatch console equipped with several computer terminals, controls, and radio frequencies to dispatch police, fire, and EMS units to the scene of emergencies to safeguard life and property;  
Determines priorities, using computer-generated recommendations to dispatch appropriate units;  
Reassigns events/incidents to additional units as priorities, needs, and/or conditions change, to ensure the most sufficient and rapid response;  
Monitors the status of police, fire, and medical units in the field;  
Notifies superiors of equipment or staffing shortages in the field;  
Relays messages and information to units, using the appropriate terminology to reduce air time;  
Adheres to the applicable Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules/regulations;  
During local emergency incidents, operates the radio consoles and Mobile Data Terminals on the Mobile Command Bus and Platform on Demand vehicle to dispatch units or equipment.

As a teletype operator:

Queries and enters information (e.g., stolen articles, wanted persons) into the Virginia Criminal Information Network (VCIN) and National Crime Information Center (NCIC) data files, using the prescribed formats and terminals;  
Retrieves and sends messages via the Police Management Interface System (PMIS);  
Processes criminal history checks and fatal accident reports;

Records information received from field units and other personnel via telephone or computer terminal and enters it into appropriate files;  
Transmits and retrieves administrative messages in a timely manner.

As a call taker:

Operates an Automatic Call Distributing console to answer, screen, and process incoming emergency and non-emergency calls for service from the general public or other public safety agencies for the protection of life and property;  
Provides caller with life-saving instructions until assistance arrives, as needed;  
Gathers, classifies, and supplements pertinent information obtained from the caller and enters it into the computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system using the appropriate screens;  
Operates a CAD terminal/keyboard and automated mapping system to enter calls and verify locations;  
Uses ACD Agent and its associated features to answer and transfer calls;  
During a life-threatening emergency, establishes communications with the caller and maintains control of the conversation until units arrive on the scene;  
Establishes communication with hearing-impaired callers by activating the text telephone to determine if assistance is needed;  
During computer down time, operates the back-up telephone system and uses the street directory, telephone lists, and complaint cards to generate the appropriate public safety response;  
Provides information or directions to callers, police officers, fire/EMS units, and other public safety agencies, adhering to Police Department and Fire Department policies and procedures governing the dissemination of information.

**KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:**

Thorough knowledge of County geography, police patrol districts, fire battalions, common route numbers, and major landmarks in order to quickly verify the CAD-recommended response and provide directions to field units;  
Thorough knowledge of policies, procedures, ordinances, and regulations affecting public safety communications, and the ability to apply them appropriately;  
Knowledge of applicable Federal Communications Commission rules and regulations;  
Knowledge of Police and Fire Department policies and procedures pertaining to the proper dissemination of information and accepted radio terminology;  
Skill in operating a computer-aided dispatch system, radios, and digital communications systems to dispatch police, fire, and emergency medical service units;  
Skill in operating a computer terminal to enter or retrieve data from local, state, and national public safety databases (e.g., VCIN, NCIC);  
Skill in operating a computer-aided dispatch system and Automatic Call Distributing console to receive, record, and monitor data about emergency calls;  
Ability to obtain essential information by telephone from excited persons;  
Ability to quickly assess the scope and magnitude of an emergency;  
Ability to act quickly and decisively in an emergency;

Ability to work calmly and effectively under stress;  
Ability to exercise tact and sound judgment;  
Ability to speak clearly and concisely;  
Ability to establish and maintain good working relationships with others.

**EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS:**

Any combination of education, experience, and training equivalent to:  
High school graduation or possession of a G.E.D. issued by a state department of education;  
Two years of experience serving in a public safety dispatch/communications center; PLUS  
Satisfactory completion of prescribed training programs in call-taking and two other public safety communications specialties.

**CERTIFICATES AND LICENSES REQUIRED:**

Basic Dispatcher certification;  
Certification from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice as a Virginia Criminal Information Systems Operator Level A/B;  
Certification in first aid/cardiopulmonary resuscitation; and  
Emergency Medical Dispatcher certification (if that is an area of specialization).  
Employees serving as one-on-one trainers also must have certification from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice as a Law Enforcement Instructor.

REVISED:                      March 12, 1999  
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APPROVED:                    October 21, 1985